**Alfred William Twyman, 1910–1970**

Art UK records two oil paintings signed ‘A.W. Twyman’ of harbour scenes in the Isle of Man, at Ramsey (1963) and Castletown (1966). A drawing signed and dated 1934 has also been reported in private hands, of St Clement’s Church, Sandwich, Kent, as seen from Church Street. The artist appears to have been a longstanding but primarily amateur painter who was baptised William Alfred Twyman. His father was another William Twyman, a brewery auctioneer’s clerk, and he was born on 20 September 1903 at Ash, near Sandwich, where the family was still living in 1911. He married locally in 1923 to Stella A.L. Rigden (1903–1995), whose father Walter Rigden ran a business in Sandwich from their home at 10 Sandwich Street. They had two sons: Alfred (b. 1924) was later a Royal Naval marine engineer officer who settled in Plymouth; Alan (1925–2013) remained in Sandwich and later inherited the Rigden house (and possibly the business) there.

In the 1920s Twyman became a quarter-master sergeant in the Territorial Army and was employed as a clerk at the Royal Sandwich Golf Club until 1929 when, in late November, he was jailed at Maidstone for a year on conviction at Dover assizes for embezzling about £200 from the Club over a period of months, mainly through failure to pay in small sums received. It is in records and reports of this that he starts appearing as Alfred William Twyman, matching the signatures on his 1960s paintings. On early release in September 1930 he returned to Sandwich where, from February 1935, his father-in-law employed him in his home-based office. Twyman’s brother-in-law, Arthur Long, took objection to this, also accusing Twyman of paying undue attention to his wife (Mrs Twyman’s sister). This resulted in a scuffle between them at 10 Sandwich Street that, in October, saw Twyman bound over by the local magistrates to keep the peace for a year and to pay minor costs (*East Kent Times*, 9 October).

The Twyman marriage appears to have been failing by 1935, however, and the Second World War may have ended it. Only Stella Twyman and their sons appear in the September 1939 Register (living at 1 Cattle Market, Sandwich), so he may already have been called up as a former reservist.

He next appears in 1956 living in Kingsway, Manchester, as Clerk of Works to the South Manchester Hospital Management Committee. As such he was one of those, including local contractors called Levi Thomason & Sons, accused of conspiring to cheat it over work tenders. The case came to trial at Manchester in October 1957 but after ten days the judge dismissed it for lack of proper evidence: all defendants were discharged (*Birmingham Daily Post*, 4 December 1957). Twyman, was presumably divorced by then, since early in 1964 he remarried in Liverpool to Nancy Wilcox (1917–2007), noted in the 1939 Register as a shorthand typist in Crosbie, Lancashire, which was her birthplace. She was an apparently outgoing personality and a letter she wrote to *The Stage* in 1997 (17 April) from a flat in Argyle Road, Southport, mentions her family making regular visits to the Isle of Man in the early 1960s. Since the two known Twyman paintings are dated 1963 and 1964, they may have met there and at least seem to have visited together in the year they married.

Twyman died on either 6 or 20 September 1970 (probate and death records are at odds) leaving declared estate of £4413. What his other paid work was and what may have been due to any sale of his paintings is unknown. His last address – 101, Burton Road, West Didsbury, Manchester – was presumably where he and Nancy lived before her final move to Southport.

*Summarised from Art UK discussion on Twyman’s ‘Castle Rushen from Castletown Harbour’ (Manx National Heritage), November 2021.*

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